CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A locking mechanism, comprising:

a plate having a first projection, a second projection and a first surface area for receiving a decorative image; and

a base having a first slot and a second slot, wherein said first slot runs at least substantially along a first axis that is at a predetermined angle with respect to a vertical axis of said base;

wherein said first slot and said second slot detachably receive said first projection when said plate is in a first position, wherein said first slot locks said first projection and said second slot locks said second projection when said plate is in a second position such that said plate is detachably coupled to said base.

2. The mechanism according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of said second slot runs at least substantially along a second axis that is at least substantially perpendicular to said first axis

3. The mechanism according to claim 1, wherein said first slot and said second slot further lock said first projection and said second projection as said plate is turned from said first position to said second position.

4. The mechanism according to claim 1, wherein said first slot and said second slot unlock said first projection and said second projection when said plate is returned from said second position to said first position, wherein said plate is removable from said base when said plate is in said first position.

5. The mechanism according to claim 1, wherein said first projection has a center portion that is at least substantially circular and at least one wing that is attached to and projects away from said center portion.

6. The mechanism according to claim 5, wherein said first slot includes at least one arc that engages said center portion of said first projection and at least one extension that receives said wings of said first projection.

7. The mechanism according to claim 6, wherein said first slot further includes at least one ledge and said ledges engage said wings as said plate is turned to and stops at said second position.

8. The mechanism according to claim 1, wherein said second projection includes a first segment and a second segment that is attached to said first segment, wherein said first segment is attached to and rises above a second surface area of said plate and said second segment is at least substantially parallel with said second surface area.

9. The mechanism according to claim 8, wherein said second slot includes a protrusion and wherein said first and second segments engage said protrusion as said plate is turned from said first position to said second position and disengage said protrusion when said plate is in said first position.

10. The mechanism according to claim 9, wherein said second slot further includes an arc, wherein at least a portion of said first segment slides along said arc as said plate is turned from said first position to said second position and from said second position to said first position.

11. The mechanism according to claim 1, further comprising a support unit, wherein said base further includes at least one tab and said support unit includes at least one slot for receiving and engaging said tabs of said base.

12. The mechanism according to claim 11, wherein said support unit is positioned against an inside surface of a portion of a carrying case, wherein said base is positioned against an outside surface of the carrying case when said slots of said support unit engage said tabs of said base.

13. The mechanism according to claim 1, wherein said plate includes a horizontal axis and said base includes a horizontal axis, wherein said horizontal axis of said plate is at a predetermined angle with respect to said horizontal axis of said base when said plate is in said first position and

said horizontal axis of said plate is at least substantially parallel with said horizontal axis of said base when said plate is in said second position.

14. A plate for a carrying case, comprising:

a first surface area;

a second surface area for receiving a decorative image;

a first projection; and

a second projection, said first and second projections being disposed on said first surface area;

wherein said first and second projections are received by first and second slots of a base when said plate is in a first position, wherein said first and second projections are engaged by the first and second slots as said plate is turned to and stops at a second position, said plate couples to the base when said first and second projections engage the first and second slots and said plate decouples from the base when said plate is in the first position.

15. A base of a carrying case, comprising:

a first slot; and

a second slot, wherein said second slot includes a protrusion;

wherein said first and second slots receive a first projection and a second projection of a plate when the plate is in a first position and said first and second slots engage the first and second projections as the plate is turned to and stops at a second position, wherein the plate couples to said base when said first and second slots engage the first and second projections and the plate decouples from said base when the plate is in the first position.

16. A method of detachably securing a plate to a base of a carrying case, comprising the steps of:

inserting a first projection and a second projection of the plate into a first slot and a second slot of the base, wherein the plate is in a first position;

turning the plate towards a second position, wherein the first slot engages the first projection and the second slot engages the second projection; and

continuing said turning the plate step until the plate reaches the second position.

17. The method according to claim 16, further comprising the steps of:

turning the plate towards the first position; and

when the plate reaches the first position, removing the plate from the base.

18. The method according to claim 17, further comprising the steps of:

positioning a support unit against an inside cover of the carrying case; and

coupling the base to the support unit such that the base is positioned against an outside surface of the carrying case.

19. The method according to claim 16, wherein the plate includes a horizontal axis and the base includes a horizontal axis, wherein the horizontal axis of the plate is at a predetermined angle with respect to the horizontal axis of the base when the plate is in the first position and the horizontal axis of the plate is at least substantially parallel with the horizontal axis of the base when the plate is in the second position.

20. A locking mechanism, comprising:

a plate having a first projection, a second projection and a first surface area for receiving a decorative image; and

a base having a first slot and a second slot;

wherein said first slot and said second slot detachably receive said first projection when said plate is in a first position, wherein said first slot locks said first projection and said second slot locks said second projection when said plate is in a second position such that said plate is detachably coupled to said base.

21. The locking mechanism according to claim 20, wherein said first slot runs at least substantially along a first axis that is at a predetermined angle with respect to a vertical axis of said base.

22. The locking mechanism according to claim 21, wherein at least a portion of said second slot runs at least substantially along a second axis that is at least substantially perpendicular to said first axis